

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SAB-02 L-03 /047 W  
-----102509 291951Z /73

R 291746Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3419  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 6185

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

PANCANAL FOR IO

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, PN  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

FOLLOWING IS USIS/PANAMA OF 29 AUG 1977 SENT ACTION USINFO  
WASHDC INFO SECSTATE WASHDC REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:ACTION:

QUOTE UNCLAS

SECSTATE FOR ARA/PAF & PAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

MEDIA REACTION

1-CANAL TREATY: WEEKEND TREATY COVERAGE CONCENTRATES AUG. 27, 28  
ON GEN. TORRIJO'S INTERVIEW WITH SEVERAL JOURNALISTS IN TOWN OF LAS  
TABLAS AUG. 26. IN INTERVIEW, TORRIJOS SAYS PANAMANIAN SHOULD BE  
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PATIENT IF TREATY IS NOT RATIFIED BY SENATE: "THERE EXISTS THIS  
POSSIBILITY. WE MUST TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT AS SOMETHING WHICH  
MIGHT HAPPEN AND IT WOULD HAVE TO BE INTERPRETED AS GREATEST  
PROVOCATION YET IN THIS BATTLE, AND IN THE FACE OF IT WE MUST  
SEARCH ANOTHER KIND OF ANSWER, WHICH WOULD NOT BE VIOLENCE."

2- PRO-GOP MATUTINO HEADS FRONT PAGE STORY AUG. 27 "OMAR SAYS

REJECTION OF TREATY IN SENATE IS ACT OF PROVOCATION." ESTRELLA'S STORY SAME DAY HEADED, "IF SENATE DOES NOT RATIFY TREATY, 'WE MUST SEARCH FOR ANOTHER ANSWER WHICH IS NOT VIOLENCE', SAYS OMAR TORRIJOS." AUG. 28 DOMINICAL HEADS PAGE ONE STORY, "TORRIJOS EXPRESSES THAT REJECTION OF TREATY WOULD BE PROOF OF LACK OF CONFIDENCE."

3- AUG. 27 STAR AND HERALD AND ESTRELLA CARRY FRONT-PAGE REPRINTS OF AUG. 26 CARL ROWAN WASHINGTON STAR COLUMN. ESTRELLA CARRIES PAGE ONE AP STORY ON REAGAN OPPOSITION TO TREATY.

4- ALL AUG. 28 PAPERS FRONT PAGE PRES. CARTER'S PLANS TO MAKE FIRESIDE CHAT TO ACQUAINT US PUBLIC WITH TREATY PROVISIONS. STAR AND HERALD HEADS AP STORY, "CARTER PREDICTS US SENATE WILL RATIFY REATY," WHILE ESTRELLA HEADS SIMILAR AP ITEM, "CARTER PREDICTS TREATY RATIFICATION." DOMINICAL'S UPI WASHINGTON STORY IS HEADED, "JIMMY CARTER WILL EXPLAIN TREATY VIA TV."

5- THREE OF FOUR MORNINGS AUG. 29 FRONT PAGE WIRE SERVICE ITEMS ON CARTER ATTEMPTS TO SWAY SENATE. CRITICA AND MATUTINO CARRY WESLEY PIPPERT UPI BY-LINER, HEADED BY CRITICA, "CARTER CONTINUES SEARCHING FOR SUPPORT FOR TREATY," AND IN MATUTINO, "CARTER STEPS UP HIS CAMPAIGN IN FAVOR OF NEW TREATY; DIRECTS HIS EFFORTS TOWARD BUSINESSMEN WITH INTERESTS IN CANAL." STAR AND HERALD FRONT PAGES WALTER MEARS AP NEWS ANALYSIS, HEADED, "LINES ARE DRAWN IN CARTER'S PC TREATY DRIVE."

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6-VICTOR URRUTIA COLUMN AUG. 28 ESTRELLA ON SENATE RATIFICATION TAKES "SENATE RATIFICATION OF TREATY FOR GRANTED, DESPITE INDICATIONS OF RECENT POLLS." URRUTIA SAYS REAGAN EFFORTS TO BLOCK RATIFICATION SHOULD "FINALLY CEDE TO DETOXIFYING TREATMENT TO WHICH THEY WILL BE SUBMITTED, ALTHOUGH MY OPTIMISTIC PREDICTION MAY FAIL IF CHAUVINISTIC FANATICS COME UP WITH ABUNDANT FUNDS TO REINITIATE INTENSE CAMPAIGN... THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT REAGAN... HAD COMPLETE SUCCESS IN PREDISPOSING OPINION OF HIS NATION AGAINST JUST AND INTELLIGENT TREATY FOR PANAMA. YES, DETOXIFYING IS POSSIBLE. BUT IT MAY TAKE MORE TIME THAN THE CURRENT SENATE HAS, AND IF TREATY IS GOOD, IT IS WORTH WAITING FOR."

7-URRUTIA BELIEVES ONE "SHOULD NOT DECEIVE ONESELF WITH THE US PEOPLE. IT IS NOT A VERY LIBERAL PEOPLE...FOR WHATEVER REASON, IT IS GENEROUS, AND HAS PROVED IT IN VARIOUS OCCASIONS." URRUTIA COMPARES POST WWII ATTITUDES OF US AND USSR TOWARD CONQUERED NATIONS: "I REMEMBER THESE TWO DISTINCT ATTITUDES RECENTLY WHEN I SAW AN EDITORIAL IN A LOCAL NEWSPAPER CALLED NEUTRON BOMB 'SUPERCAPITALIST WEAPON,' AND ALLEGED THAT US WAS SO INTERESTED IN PRIVATE PROPERTY THAT IT EAGERLY SEARCHES WAYS TO KILL HUMAN BEINGS WITHOUT DESTROYING PRIVATE PROPERTY. IMPLICATION

WAS THAT IN COMMUNIST NATIONS, THEY LOOK WITH EQUAL URGENCY FOR THE OPPOSITE: THAT IS, MEANS TO DESTROY BUILDINGS... WITHOUT KILLING ANYONE. A VERY NEAT TRICK, IF IT WERE POSSIBLE."

8-ESTRELLA AUG. 29 EDIT CALLS ON OPPOSITION SENATORS TO NOTE CHANGES IN US FOREIGN POLICY IN PAST, WITH RESPECT TO COMMUNIST CHINA, CUBA AND VIET NAM, AND CAUTIONS THAT PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ARE OFTEN PROVED WRONG: "FOR THIS REASON IT IS TO BE GREATLY HOPED THAT THESE US LEGISLATORS WHO ARE PERHAPS SINCERELY OPPOSED TO TREATY... WILL REFLECT WITH SERENITY AND CLEAR JUDGEMENTS SO THAT THEY WILL ARRIVE AT HEALTHY CONCLUSION THAT THEY ARE WRONG."

9-COLUMNIST CARLOS NUNEZ IN AUG. 29 CRITICA DISMISSES ANTI-UNCLASSIFIED

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TREATY ARGUMENTS THAT PANAMA IS TOO CLOSELY ALLIED WITH LEFTIST REGIMES SUCH AS CUBA: "FACT THAT PANAMA IS SUPPORTED BY FIDEL, WITHIN AUTHENTIC REVOLUTIONARY SCHEME, AT SAME TIME BY PINOCHET, WHO DEFINES HIMSELF AS PROFOUND ANTIMARXIST, IS CLEAREST DEMONSTRATION" OF JUSTNESS OF CAUSE. "BUT THIS TRIUMPH," CONTINUES NUNEZ, "HAS BEEN ACHIEVED WITH VERY CLEAR PRINCIPLES: THAT IS, NEITHER FIDEL'S NOR PINOCHET'S SUPPORT HAS CHANGED DIRECTION OF TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT'S LINE. SUPPORT WHICH COMES TO US FROM ABROAD, FROM SUCH DISSIMILAR IDEOLOGICAL VOICES, IS DUE TO SIMPLE FACT: PANAMANIAN CAUSE IS POPULAR ONE..."

10-DOMINICAL AUG. 28 EDIT SUPPORTS TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON: "RENDEZVOUS IN WASHINGTON, BESIDES CONFIRMING SUPPORT OF LATAM FOR PANAMANIAN CAUSE, WILL ALSO SERVE TO ESTABLISH WHAT HAS BEEN CALLED NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD AND ITS NEIGHBORS SOUTH OF RIO GRANDE. A NEW POLICY OF DRAWING CLOSER WHICH MUST REPLACE ESTRANGEMENT MAINTAINED FOR MANY YEARS, AN ESTRANGEMENT THAT HAS DRAMATICALLY DETERIORATED HEMISPHERIC RELATIONS."

11-MATUTINO AUG. 27 EDIT AND ESTRELLA AUG. 28 EDIT TAKE ON PANAMANIAN CRITICS OF TREATY PROPOSAL. MATUTINO SAYS THERE ARE PANAMANIAN WHO, "CONSIDERING THEMSELVES ENEMIES OF CURRENT REGIME, BELIEVE THEY SHOULD SYSTEMATICALLY OPPOSE...EVERYTHING EMANATING FROM THAT GOVERNMENT, EVEN IF THAT SOMETHING IS THE SALVATION OF THE FATHERLAND." MATUTINO CAUTIONS PANAMANIAN TO SEE TREATY AND CANAL ISSUE "AS PROBLEM OF THE FATHERLAND, NOT AS A PRODUCT ELABORATED IN WORKSHOPS OF ANY SINGLE POLITICAL FLAG."

12- ESTRELLA CRITICIZES THOSE WHO BELIEVE TREATY DOES NOT CONTAIN ALL IT SHOULD IN PANAMA'S FAVOR, AND SAYS THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE REALISTIC OUTLOOK: "THEY SHOULD THINK FOR A MOMENT-- UNCLASSIFIED

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AND A MOMENT WILL BE PLENTY--IF ANY US NEGOTIATOR OR PRES. CARTER WOULD HAVE SIGNED ANY DOCUMENT WHICH WOULD COMPLETELY AND FOREVER STRIP US OF ALL ITS RIGHTS. THEY WILL HAVE TO REACH NEGATIVE CONCLUSION. AND IF NEW TREATY IS NOT SIGNED OR RATIFIED, HE OLD ONE (OF 1903) WILL CONTINUE IN EFFECT, TO GREAT SATISFACTION OF US SECTORS WHICH DO NOT WANT ANY CHANGE."

13- AUG. 29 CRITICA RUNS FRONT-PAGE HEAD, INSIDE COLUMN BY DR. SECUNDINO TORRES GUDINO, UPANAMA LAW PROFESSOR, ADVISING PANAMANIAN TO VOTE YES IN TREATY PLEBESCITE, BUT "UNDER PROTEST," SINCE TREATY DOES NOT CONTAIN ALL IT SHOULD, INCLUDING IMMEDIATE RECUPERATION OF TOTAL JURISDICTION OVER ZONE AND CANAL. "BUT PACT ACHIEVED IS WHAT IS POSSIBLE WITHIN JUSTICE, AND IN US AS WELL AS IN OUR COUNTRY THERE EXIST DISCORDANT VOICES, GIVEN THAT NEITHER WE NOR THEY ARE SATISFIED."

14-DRUGS: DOMINICAL AUG. 28 PRINTS TWO-PAGE INSIDE SPREAD ON NARCOTICS, HEADED, "US RECOGNIZES LEADERSHIP OF PANAMA IN CONTROL OF DRUG TRAFFIC; END OF BLACK LEGEND." ARTICLE PRINTS PICTURES OF NINE ACCUSED DRUG TRAFFIKERS, INCLUDING TWO US CITIZENS, AND REPRINTS TWO LETTERS WRITTEN FROM LOCAL DEA OFFICE TO G-2 HEAD COL. NORIEGA, WHO IS CHARGED WITH NARCOTICS CONTROL IN PANAMA. COLUMNIST RICARDO LINCE IN AUG. 29 EDITION OF MATUTINO WRITES THAT PANAMANIAN PERFORMANCE IN APPREHENDING DRUG TRAFFIKERS HELPED IN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, SINCE US RECOGNIZED EFFICIENCY AND SERIOUSNESS OF PANAMANIAN IN THIS AREA.  
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JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

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